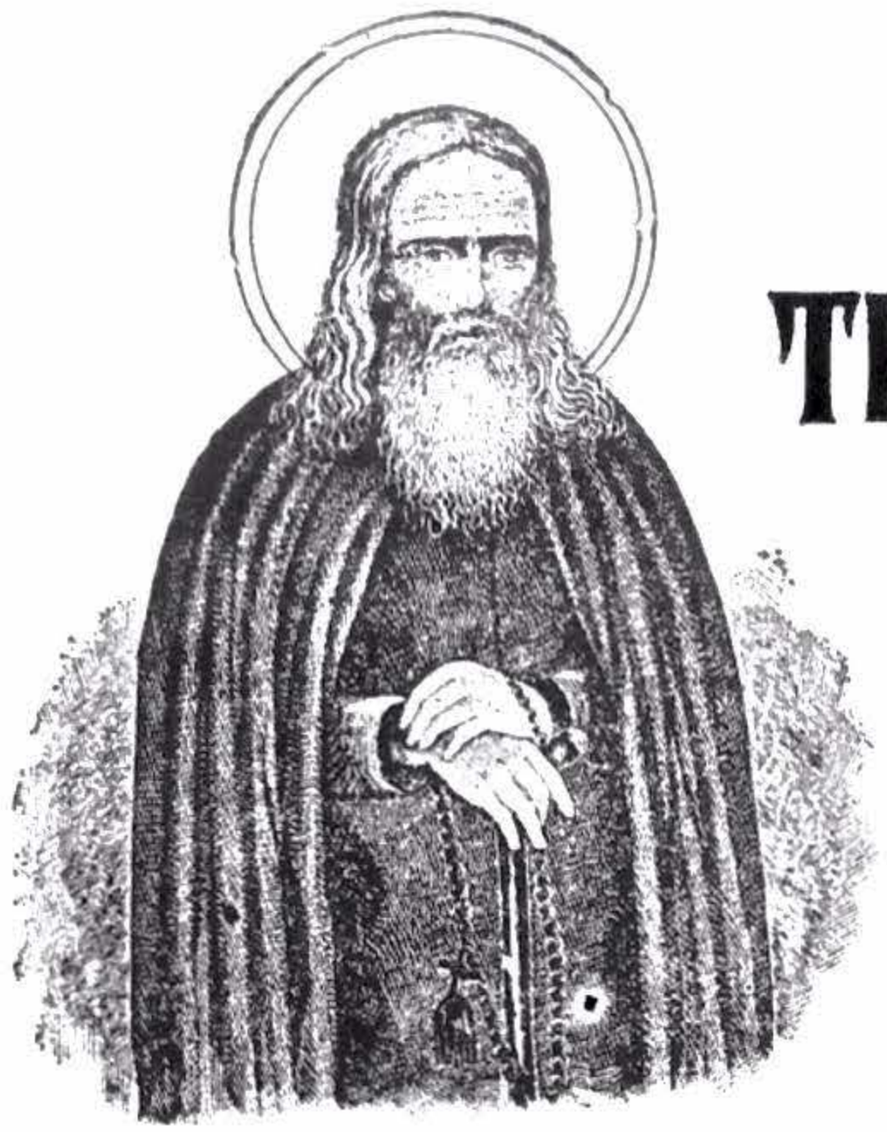
THE ORTHODOX WORD

May - June 1974

Ninety Cents

SAINT OF BLUE JAY LAKE



THE ORTHODOX WORD

A Bimonthly Periodical

OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF
SAINT HERMAN OF ALASKA

Established with the blessing of His Eminence the late *John* (*Maximovitch*), Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco, Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia

PLATINA, CALIFORNIA 96076

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A Response from Soviet Russia

A LETTER TO THE BROTHERHOOD "ORTHODOX ACTION"
MAY 16, 1974

TO THE ORTHODOX BROTHERHOOD in Belgium and other countries:

Our region as a whole is under the bombardment of Baptist literature. But now the literature of your Orthodox Brotherhood also has begun to appear. This has very much encouraged us Orthodox. You should be told that here it is impossible to obtain anything. Therefore your booklets and pamphlets are copied out and distributed wherever possible. And the Orthodox Christians know now that they are not alone.

Who are you? French people who have accepted the Orthodox Faith, or Russians who live in foreign countries? Judging by your letters, you have a Russian church there and Russian clergy. Let your pastors write our Patriarch, so that he would order the printing of the Gospel and other church literature for the people; here there is none of this. And for the young people one needs to write as you have written: that all intelligent people should believe in God, that atheism is a lie and untruth. And where is Solzhenitsyn now? Is he with you or not? Where does he live?

Your letters bring us great joy and hope. We will send you addresses soon of those to whom you should send your booklets. We read them all together, and one of us gives explanations.

Orthodox Christians of the Altai region

Christ is Risen from the dead!

THE MISSION TO THE WORK OF THE BROTHER-

OUR BROTHERHOOD, "Orthodox Action," was founded by the Ever-memorable Archbishop John Maximovitch in 1959.* Our Brotherhood in Belgium has existed since 1965, and its head is the local priest (of the Russian Church Outside of Russia), Father Chedomir Ostoich.

From its very foundation, our Brotherhood has taken on itself a difficult task: the publication of spiritual and apologetical literature to be sent to Russia. In the past years we have published 25 different pamphlets and appeals, each in 2000 to 3000 copies. All this literature we send by various means to different areas of the USSR, to the addresses of various institutions, schools, libraries, and private persons whose addresses we obtain also by various means.

Knowing that in Russia the militant atheist regime forbids the publication of such literature, we consider it our duty, even if in small quantity, to send it to persons seeking spiritual food and not finding it in the USSR.

In the past years we have had many, very many proofs that our literature gets to the addressees and brings many of them great joy. We have many letters of gratitude from "over there", with requests to send them Gospels, Bibles, and miscellaneous spiritual literature, which is totally lacking in the USSR. Large publications do not reach their destination by normal means and are confiscated by the Soviet censorship. Sometimes it is possible to send such books by special means, but our small publications, printed on very thin paper, get through in ordinary letters. The Soviet censorship is technically in no condition to check all the correspondence which now goes into the USSR.

We operate on funds collected among Russian Orthodox people who sympathize with our missionary work and understand how essential it is, and also by our own members' dues.

We realize that without the blessing and help of God we can do nothing; *without Me ye can do nothing*. Therefore, we come together and

* For Archbishop John's inspiring sermon at the opening of this Brotherhood, see *The Orthodox Word*, 1973, no. 6 (53).

SOVIET RUSSIA
HOOD "ORTHODOX ACTION"

pray to God and entreat Him to show us ways and to make us wise in our difficult undertaking. We clearly feel God's help, without which we could not have existed these ten years. And in these years we have brought joy to our fellow countrymen who are deprived of the Word of God. Perhaps we have even converted someone to the path of Truth and have saved him from the microbes of godlessness. We know also from letters we have received that in many places our literature is copied out and distributed among the people. And even the Soviet newspapers have written many times about the penetration of our literature into the USSR.

There have also been, to be sure, letters from incorrigible atheists, with threats and abuse.

How can people help us? First of all, by their constant prayers. Then, it is necessary to increase the sending of letters with spiritual literature to Russia. This, of course, requires quite some money. One must look for people with money who will help partially to finance our missionary work. Also, sometimes we have the opportunity to send pamphlets and even books in large quantities and this also requires money. It is absolutely necessary to call young people to take part in this most important task of the Russian Diaspora.

For Archbishop John, the Founder of "Orthodox Action," we have a special veneration, and we feel that he is praying for us before the Throne of God.

Kozma Skvartsov
Secretary of the Belgian Brotherhood

HELP TO SPREAD ORTHODOXY BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN.
SEND CONTRIBUTIONS TO:

"Action Orthodoxe"
St. Gilles 1 B.P. 17
1060 Brussels, Belgium

The Eighth Anniversary

OF THE REPOSE OF ARCHBISHOP JOHN MAXIMOVITCH

IN THE present time of apostasy and spiritual paralysis, few are the sources of living spiritual strength from which the Orthodox faithful can draw in order to nourish the fire of true faith. Orthodox Americans in particular, having no Orthodox tradition of their own, are in special need of such living sources. The monasteries and holy places of America are such sources, and one of these holy places — the Sepulchre of Archbishop John Maximovitch in San Francisco — is a source of special grace for those who visit it with faith. For eight years this Sepulchre has been a place of fervent prayer. Many prayers have been answered here, and many important church undertakings have begun here with the asking of his blessing upon them.

Only once a year the Divine Liturgy is celebrated in the Sepulchre on the anniversary of the righteous hierarch's repose — June 19|July 2. For venerators of Archbishop John, this day has a special flavor. There is a spirit rather like that of the catacombs which seem to lie ahead for true Orthodox Christians in America: the Liturgy is celebrated very early in the morning, at 6 a.m., and is not announced publicly, word of it being passed from mouth to mouth; the faithful gather about the hierarch's tomb, which stands in the center of the narrow grave-vault, quite literally underground, sharing a oneness of spirit seldom encountered elsewhere today; the service and the chanting are simple, and all the people join in singing the chants they know.

This year the Divine Liturgy was celebrated by Bishop Nektary of Seattle and Archimandrite Mitrophan, a priest who was very close to Vladika both in Paris and San Francisco. Archbishop Anthony of San Francisco was also present and delivered a brief sermon calling on the faithful not only to pray *for* the righteous hierarch's repose, but also to pray *to* him, asking his intercession in these most difficult times for the Orthodox faithful. Then Archimandrite Mitrophan delivered a flaming sermon which came directly from his believing heart. "This is the tomb of a wonderworker," he boldly told the faithful. "And what a shame it is to us Russians not to recognize this, when other peoples already venerate him as a Saint! The French have called him 'St. John of Versailles,' and the Greeks have composed services in his honor and printed his icon. Some people have asked me: 'Do you mean to say he is a *Saint?!*' And to this I answer: Canonizations are the business of bishops, and that is beyond me; but what I know for certain is that *this was a slave of God,* and he works miracles!"

With each year the veneration of this 20th-century wonderworker increases. The darker grows the world of apostasy outside, the more brightly does his example shine forth and inspire us with the knowledge that the flame of true Orthodox sanctity has not died out, but will light up the path of those who rightly believe, even in the dark days ahead, and unto the end of the age!

The Sepulchre of Archbishop John Maximovitch
under the Altar of the Cathedral "The Joy of All Who Sorrow"

TROPARION, TONE 5

To the Special Melody: THE CO-UNORIGINATE WORD

(From one of the Greek Services in honor of Blessed Archbishop John)

LIKE A SPIRITUAL DAYSTAR in heaven's firmament,* thou didst encompass the whole world and didst enlighten men's souls.* Hence thy name is glorified in the East and West,* for thou shonest with the grace of the Sun of Righteousness,* O John, our beloved shepherd.* Wherefore, cease not to entreat Christ, that He may have mercy on our souls.

THE LIFE OF

Saint Euprosynus

MARTYR-CONFESSOR OF BLUE-JAY LAKE

Commemorated on March 20

WILD AND DESERTED is the site of the Blue Jay Lake Hermitage. It is far from populous cities and villages, and the gaze of the occasional pilgrim comes to rest now on the broad, muddy and scarcely passable marshes which stretch out far and wide, now on the dense green forests which abound, now on the whole network of lakes large and small, sometimes self-contained, sometimes joined by streams and rivers. There are about eighteen lakes in all, and one of them (Savino) is remarkable in having at its bottom a funnel-shaped pit into which, every certain number of years, usually in the summertime, the waters together with all the fish disappear with a loud noise; and then, after another definite period of time, the waters again return to their place through the same pit. Of the streams one may mention Mill Stream, named after the monastery mill which was located on it, and the Gvozden, on whose banks the blessed founder of the Hermitage, St. Euphrosynus, first settled.

Brighter than the luminous stars above shine forth the Saints of God, illuminating the path to the everlasting life beyond the grave. With their holy and God-pleasing life on earth they teach us how to please God, and with their prayers in heaven before the Throne of the Pre-eternal God they help us pass successfully through the burdensome path of life. By raising up at an opportune time His chosen ones, the Lord manifests through them diverse miracles and signs in order to make wise those who have gone astray. Just as the sky is adorned with glittering stars which enlighten the earth through the darkness of night, so also our Orthodox Church is adorned with wondrous Saints who have pleased God by their virtuous lives.

The holy Martyr Euphrosynus, schema-monk and desert-dweller of Blue Jay Lake, was born in the second half of the 16th century. In the world his name was Ephraim, and he was from the region of Karelia. His father Simeon and his mother, whose name is not known, lived near Lake Ladoga. The nearness of Valaam Monastery exercised an influence on the religious outlook

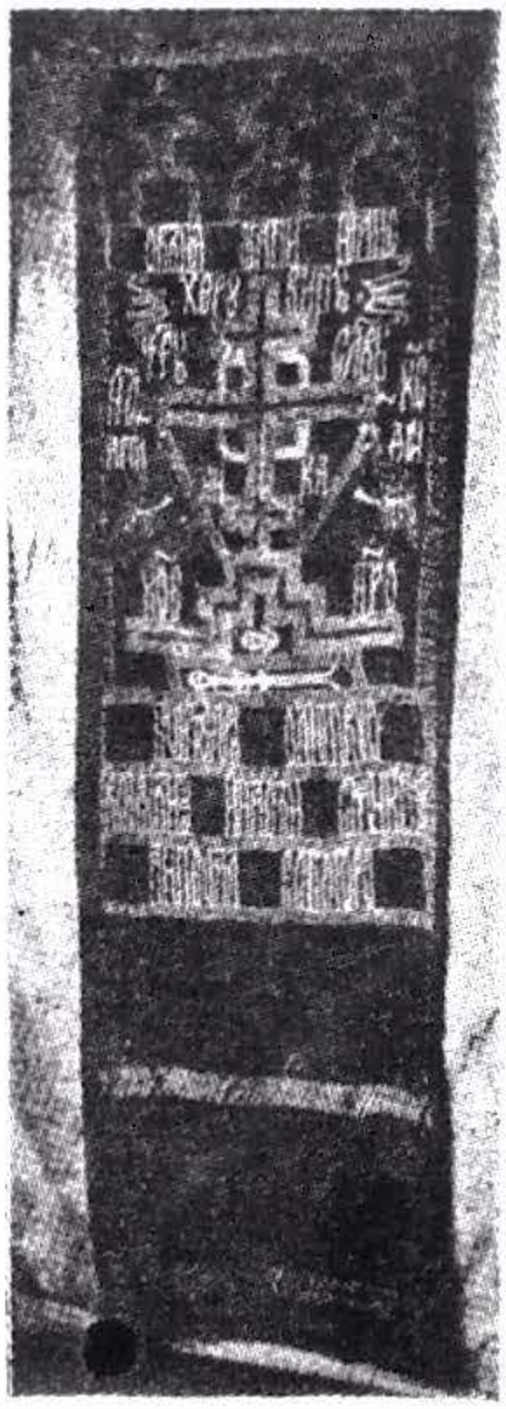
* Translated from the Lives of the Saints, Moscow Synodal Edition, Supplementary Volume 2, 1916; and *Russian Pilgrim*: 1902, p. 642; and 1912, p 558.

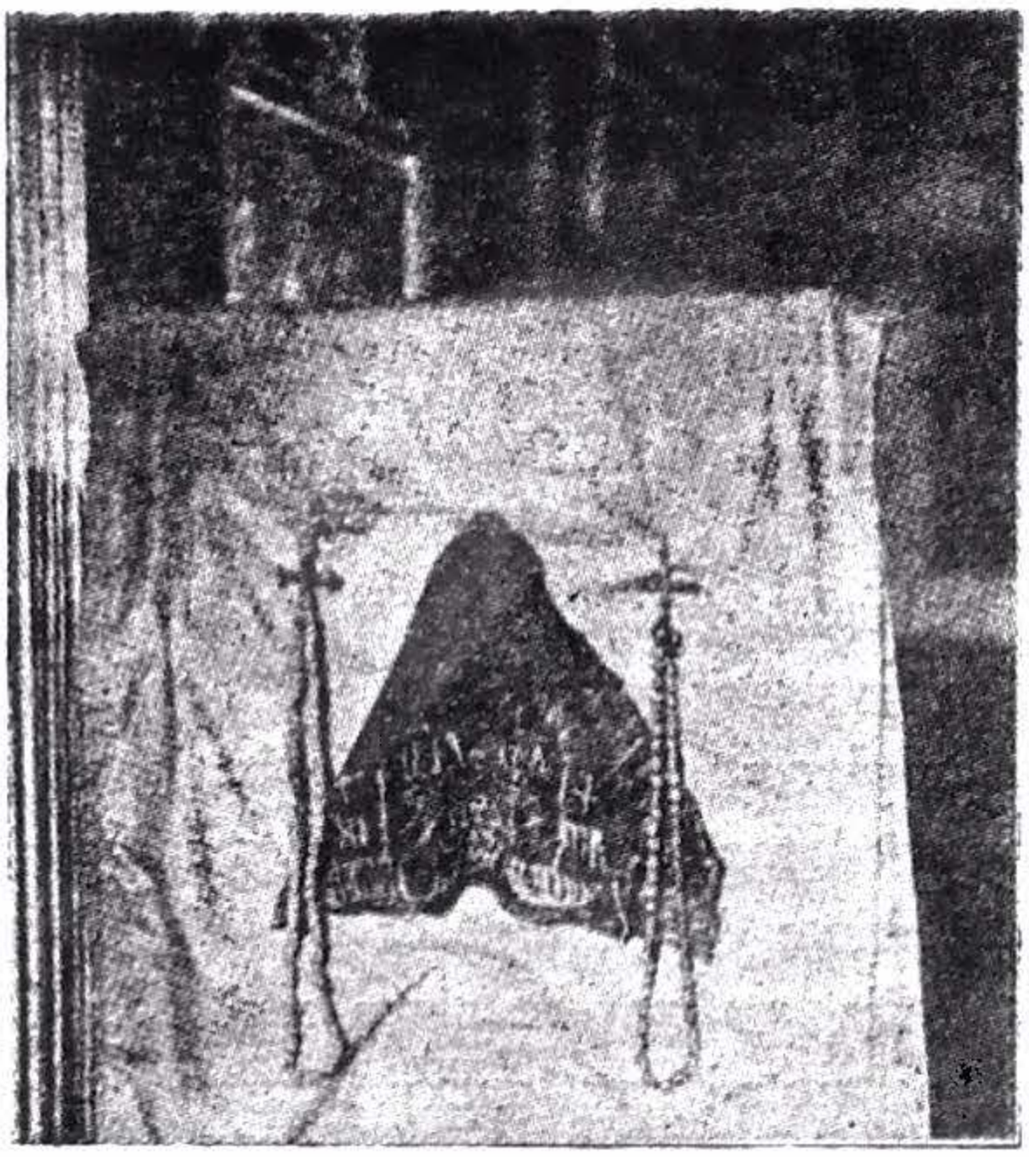
17th-century Icon, gift of Tsar Alexei Mihailovich to the Saint's Monastery

ST. EUPHROSYNUS OF BLUE JAY LAKE

Troparion, Tone 4

HAVING DIRECTED thy mind towards God from thy youth by renouncing the world,* O blessed Euphrosynus,* thou didst settle in an impassable wilderness,* in which thou didst dwell valiantly in abstinence, in prayers and fasting, as is fitting,* being strengthened by God,* and didst finish thy life by innocently suffering murder at the hands of the enemies' sons.* Wherefore, thou hast been crowned together with holy monks and martyrs,* with whom thou dost stand before the Throne of the Most Holy Trinity.* Pray, we entreat thee,* that we may be given remission of our sins* and may be granted great mercy.





ST. EUPHROSYNUS

Above: St. Euphrosynus beside the Cross and the earthern cave where he first settled and where he suffered martyrdom on the shores of Blue Jay Lake.

At left: The Schema-epitrachelion (above) and the cowl and prayer-ropes which the Saint was wearing when he was martyred and when his incorrupt relics were uncovered.

of Ephraim. He left his parents' home and lived for some time at the monastery. Here he acquired knowledge of the typicon of divine services and developed a kinship to the severe conditions of the monastic life. But for the time being Ephraim did not become a monk. He moved to Novgorod the Great and lived there for quite a long time, and then he went away to the Novgorod region, to a place called Bezhetsk, and settled in the village of Doloska, some fifteen miles east of the city of Ustiuzhna of Zhelezopolska. In this village, at the church of the Holy Great-martyr George, Ephraim served for a long time as a Reader. He had come to mature age when the grace of God touched his heart and ignited in him an unvanquishable desire to undertake monastic labor. After putting his house in complete order and making provision for his property, Ephraim went on his way, having nothing with him apart from the garment which he wore. From that time on his thought did not return to the house he had left but strove only towards God so that, once having put his hand to the plough, he no longer looked back (Luke 9:62).

With the firm decision to become a monk, Ephraim came to the Dormition Monastery of the Tikhvin Mother of God and implored the superior and the brethren to vouchsafe him the tonsure. His mature years, his account of his youth spent under the shelter of Valaam Monastery, and his many years of service in the Church of God as a Reader, gained for him the trust of everyone, and his entreaty was soon fulfilled. Ephraim was clothed in the Angelic Habit and at his tonsure was given the name Euphrosynus. Having attained to that for which his soul had striven for so long, St. Euphrosynus with zeal gave himself over to monastic labors. Enlightening his mind with the Word of God, which he read with love and heedfulness, and confirming his heart on the rock of faith, he subdued his flesh by fasting and continence, by humble obedience to the abbot and the brethren, by fervent labor in the works which he was given to do, working not for the sake of men but for God, in purity of conscience and unhypocritical love. In the midst of labors and ascetic exploits he always kept in mind the end of life and the future reward from the Judge Who is no respecter of persons.

Having lived for a certain time in the Tikhvin Monastery, the Saint felt a great and irrepressible desire to go away to the wilderness into solitude, and there to labor for God in a severe life of fasting and silence. He went to the abbot, told him about his desire, and entreated his blessing for this plan. The superior blessed him, gave him instruction about the desert life, and let him go in peace from the monastery, saying, "Go, child, and may God be with you." This was in the year 1600.

Being deprived of any kind of possessions at all, but with a heart overflowing with joy, the Saint set out on his way. He was drawn to the place he knew, the above-mentioned region of Bezhetsk, where he found a desert for himself surrounded by ravines and forests in the midst of moss-covered swamps and inaccessible marshes. Rivers and lakes surrounded him like a wall and made the desert little accessible to men. Here, in a wild dense forest near the river Chagoda, on the shores of Blue Jay Lake, ten miles from the village of Doloska and 35 miles from Ustiuzhna, the Saint chose a place suitable for solitude, sufficiently large for the foundation of a monastery, and he settled there. With fervent prayer he gave thanks to God Who had given him a new dwelling place, and he was like a bird which had acquired a house for itself, or a swallow which had sought out a nest for herself.

"Look down upon this place." the Saint cried out to the Lord, "and bless it, and enable me to serve Thee in this place all the days of my life; for that is why I came here, so as to labor for Thee, that in me Thy Most Holy Name may be glorified."

In this chosen place St. Euphrosynus planted a Cross, dug a cave for himself, and began to lead a severe ascetic life, spending his time in prayer, vigils, psalm-singing, often not blinking his eyes the whole night in prayer. His labors in fasting and continence were unceasing. For two whole years he did not see a human face, being hidden by the forest ravines from the attention of the neighboring residents, and therefore also for both of these years he did not once eat bread. His food was what grew in the forest — berries and mushrooms. Often he had to eat white moss, which was called *yagodnik*. He also had handiwork: he wove fishing nets. Having lived a year in the cave, St. Euphrosynus made a small cell and continued his solitary life, which consisted of prayer, ascetic labors, work and deprivations. For a year more after this he hid himself from the eyes of men; but then he was discovered.

Some time passed, and the glory of his ascetic and virtuous life spread abroad through all the neighboring villages. Pious people began to come to him for instruction, prayer, and counsel. Others, being zealous for his virtuous life, came to him in the desert to learn the labors of piety, and they settled next to him. Little by little a spiritual flock gathered around the Saint and already in the first year after his way of life had been discovered it was necessary to build a larger dwelling so that all the brethren could pray together. And so a church was built, being dedicated to the Annunciation of the Most Holy Mother of God. St. Euphrosynus and his fellow ascetics undertook the work themselves, clearing the forest, hewing timber, and erecting a log church. Around the church they built their little log-cabin cells; and thus a monastery

was established. Its location was about three miles from the original site of St. Euphrosynus' labors, which was later to be called the Old Hermitage. Since the blessed Elder, because of his profound self-denial and humility, did not have the priestly rank, the consecration of the newly-built temple was performed by the priest-monk *St. Gurias,** founder of a monastery at Shalatsk, a man of holy life, a friend and co-laborer of the desert-dweller Euphrosynus. This was done with the blessing of the Archbishop of Novgorod, who at that time was Isidore (1603-1609). St. Gurias would occasionally visit the desert-dweller of Blue Jay Lake for common prayer and spiritual converse, and undoubtedly also to give him communion of the Holy Mysteries. The road between them, more than forty miles long, lay through quicksand, mossy swamps, and little-accessible bogs; up to the present century this road was still pointed out by the local inhabitants. On one of these visits St. Euphrosynus received at the hand of St. Gurias the tonsure into the great angelic order, the holy Schema, retaining his former name.

After the consecration of the church the Saint continued to labor with zeal, leading others on the path to salvation. In all he lived here seven years, and God granted him the gift of clairvoyance.

In those years the Russian land was undergoing the difficult "time of troubles." After the death of Boris Godunov in 1605, the Roman Catholic Pretender was enthroned in Russia, and after his speedy overthrow, during the four-year governance of Basil Shuisky, the government remained without a Tsar, being subjected to internal quarrels, disorders, and civil war called forth by new pretenders, and external dangers from the Poles and Swedes. The Catholic Poles occupied Smolensk and Moscow itself, and the Protestant Swedes occupied Novgorod. Bands of Cossacks and bandits, as well as detachments of Poles and Lithuanians, wandered about, laying waste the land and killing the inhabitants. At the beginning of 1612, in Nizhni-Novgorod, at the appeal of the Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra, a regiment was gathered from among the people, and it, under the leadership of Cosmas Minin and Prince Pozharsky, was to free Moscow from the Poles and give peace and calm to the Russian land, which had suffered so much from the time of troubles, and to the Orthodox Church. But still the troubles and evil deeds held sway in the whole Russian land. During these disturbances St. Euphrosynus also was destined to die the death of an innocent martyr.

A certain band of Polish Latins, who probably belonged to the Lisovsky Regiment, reached the neighborhood of Ustiuzhna with the aim of pillaging and robbing. The inhabitants, being frightened by the robberies, plundering,

* Abbot since 1603 of the Dormition Monastery, 24 miles from Ustiuzhna.

and acts of violence of these foreigners, for a long time had been used to hiding in the forests in the midst of the swamps and quicksand. The monastery of St. Euphrosynus was a convenient and safe refuge, being far away from the dwellings of men and surrounded by rivers, lakes, and mossy swamps. Therefore, many people gathered there, not only the simple people but also some of the nobles, hoping to hide from the foraging Poles. But the monastery was destined to suffer sacrilege from these heretics. St. Euphrosynus foresaw the approaching calamity and warned the residents of the monastery and everyone who had sought protection in it. On March 19, 1612, the Saint revealed to them that armed enemies were approaching, and he advised them to take care for their own safety. "My brethren and beloved children in Christ," said the Saint: "Whoever wishes to escape certain death, leave the monastery of the Most Holy Mother of God and save yourselves from the great calamity, for it is pleasing to the righteous judgment of God that evil enemies will soon come to this holy place."

Many did not believe him. "And why do you yourself not leave this holy place?" they asked him. The Elder replied: "I came here in order to die for Christ." However, some considered this reply to be insincere, and they continued to think that the Elder was speaking in this way out of ill will towards them, desiring to save himself alone from the sword of the enemy. But those who obeyed the Saint indeed were saved, while those who did not believe him all perished by a cruel death from the Latins.

Among the residents of the monastery was a certain monk whose name was Jonah. Being frightened by the Saint's clairvoyance, which he considered to be from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wished to flee together with the others. But St. Euphrosynus separated him from the others and kept him with himself, enkindling in him zeal for the house of God and a readiness to remain here unto death.

"Brother Jonah," said the Saint, "why do you allow faint-hearted fear into your soul? When there is to be a battle, then is the time when one must show manliness. If God is with us, who is against us? And *who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature* (Romans 8:35, 38-39). None of these things can do this. Why have you become frightened, brother? There is nothing frightful in that which threatens us. Death? But it is not frightful, since by its means we are departing for the harbor. Robbery? But *naked I came, naked I will depart* (Job 1:21). Confinement? But *the earth is the Lord's, and all the fulness thereof* (Psalm 23:1). Should we fear slander? But *when men shall say all*

manner of evil against you... great is your reward in heaven (Matt. 5:11, 12). I saw a sword, and the heaven covered with lightning; I expected death, and thought on what is mortal; I contemplated the sufferings of earth, and thought of the honors above and the crown on high as the end of labors, and for me this was sufficient consolation and contrition. May the will of God be done! Let us not be afraid of some passing fear, for the sake of Christ's love. It is for this that we were called and offered our vows to the Lord, in order to die in this place for the sake of His Holy Name. With laymen it is something else; they are not bound by a vow. They must preserve themselves also for their children."

Thus did the Elder instruct the monk Jonah. The monk was encouraged, became inflamed in spirit, and placing his hope in God, decided not to leave the monastery, but to die here in the wilderness with his Elder, Euphrosynus. The Saint, having informed those present about the approaching calamity, immediately dressed himself in the Schema and began to pray to God and the Most Holy Mother of God that They might grant to him the lot of the righteous. He spent the whole day and night without sleep, singing and glorifying God with tears.

Everything happened according to the word of the Saint. On the following day, March 20, there appeared, no one knows from where, blood-thirsty enemies, and they surrounded the monastery, and everyone they found here they slew with the sword.

The martyr's death of the holy Elder Euphrosynus, wonderworker of Blue Jay Lake, is described in the original Life of the Saint by another monk Jonah (in 1650) thus: "Our holy Father Euphrosynus came out of his cell to meet the enemies in his complete monastic habit, the Great Schema, showing them thereby his heartfelt striving toward God, regarding all fear as nothing and offering himself as a lamb for slaughter. He came to the precious Cross which he himself had planted, placing his hope in the Life-giving Cross of the Lord... The sons of the evil one leaped at the holy Elder like demon-possessed dogs, saying to him: 'Give us the possessions of the monastery.' The Elder Euphrosynus, having neither gold nor silver, nor any material things save for necessities, said to them: 'All the possessions of the monastery and of myself are in the church of the Most Pure Mother of God,' thus showing them his true treasure which could not be stolen, and placing all his hope in God. And the sons of Cain rejoiced, thinking he was speaking about corruptible goods. One bloodthirsty killer hit St. Euphrosynus' neck with his sword, cutting it halfway through, and the Elder fell to the earth, dead. Then the Cain-like ones ran to the church, and finding nothing there, one of them returned to the body of St. Euphrosynus, carrying an axe, and with it struck the precious

head of our holy Father, Abba Euphrosynus, penetrating to the brain, thus completing the suffering of this new sufferer who gave up his soul into the hands of God... The martyrdom of this holy Father, Abbot Euphrosynus, occurred near the precious and Life-giving Cross of the Lord which he himself had planted, in the year 7120 (1612), on the 20th day of the month of March, the day of commemoration of our Holy Fathers who were slain in the Monastery of St. Sabbas the Sanctified."

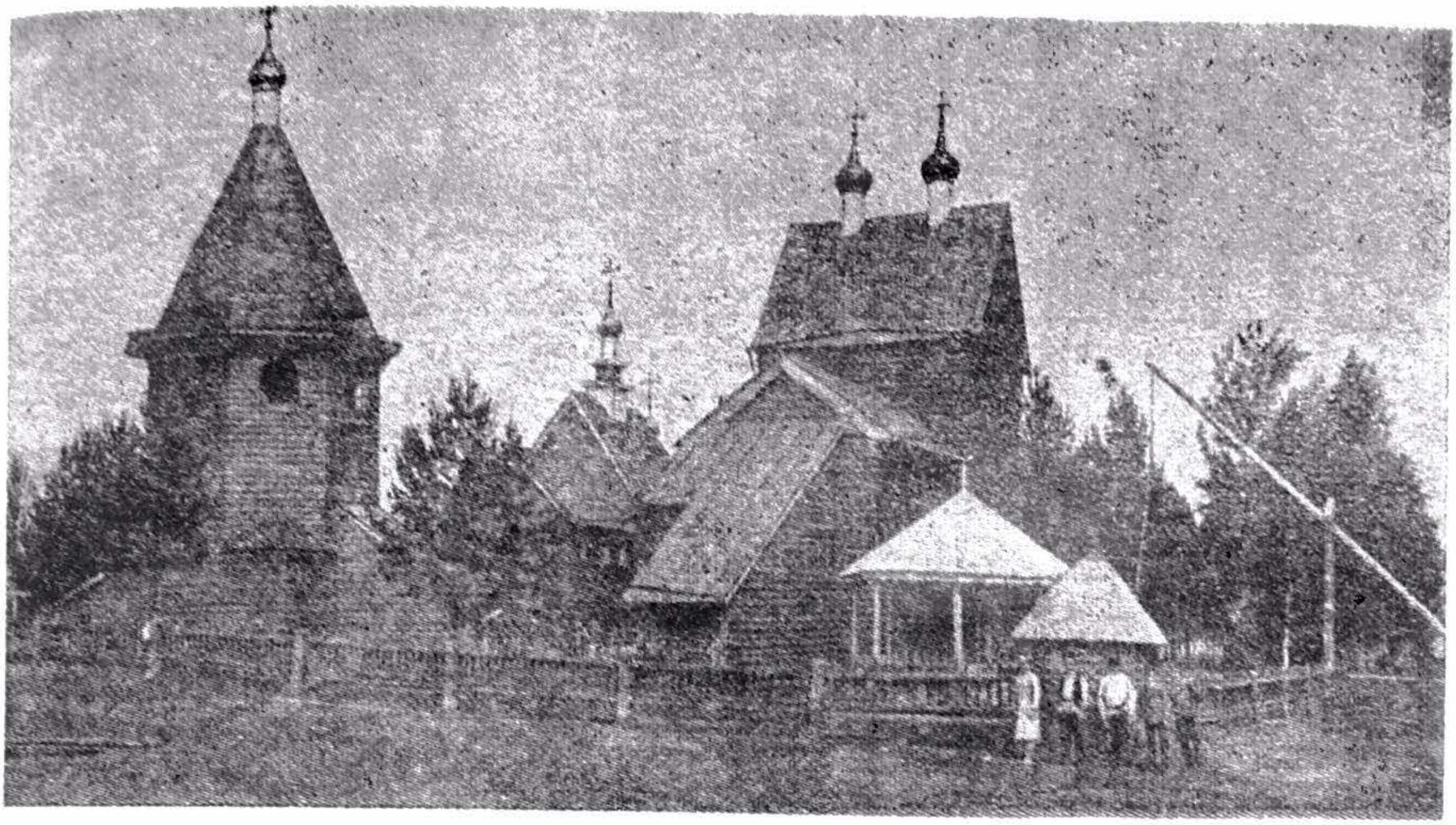
Such was the martyr's death of St. Euphrosynus. The monk Jonah, whom the Saint had prevented from fleeing, died together with the Saint.

It was God's will that one of the eyewitnesses of the death of St. Euphrosynus should remain among the living. There lived in the village of Doloska a pious peasant, John, whose surname was Suma, with his son Emilian. Both of them had reverence for the monastery of the Most Holy Mother of God and greatly revered the Elder Euphrosynus, and the Elder also loved them for their piety. Together with others, John and his son sought refuge from the Latins in the monastery, and on March 20, when the enemies came, John was in the cell of the Saint. Emilian, as it happened, was outside the monastery. In their work of murder the evil-doers gave John also a blow, and he fell among the dead. When the Latins came outside after searching the church and not finding anything there, one of them, looking at the corpses, supposed that John was still alive and gave him a second wound. After the departure of the marauding Latins, he regained consciousness and told his son, who had returned, what had happened. Having recovered from his wounds, John Suma lived two years longer and was buried beside St. Euphrosynus. From them the nearby inhabitants found out about the devastation of the monastery and the martyr's death of the holy Elder.

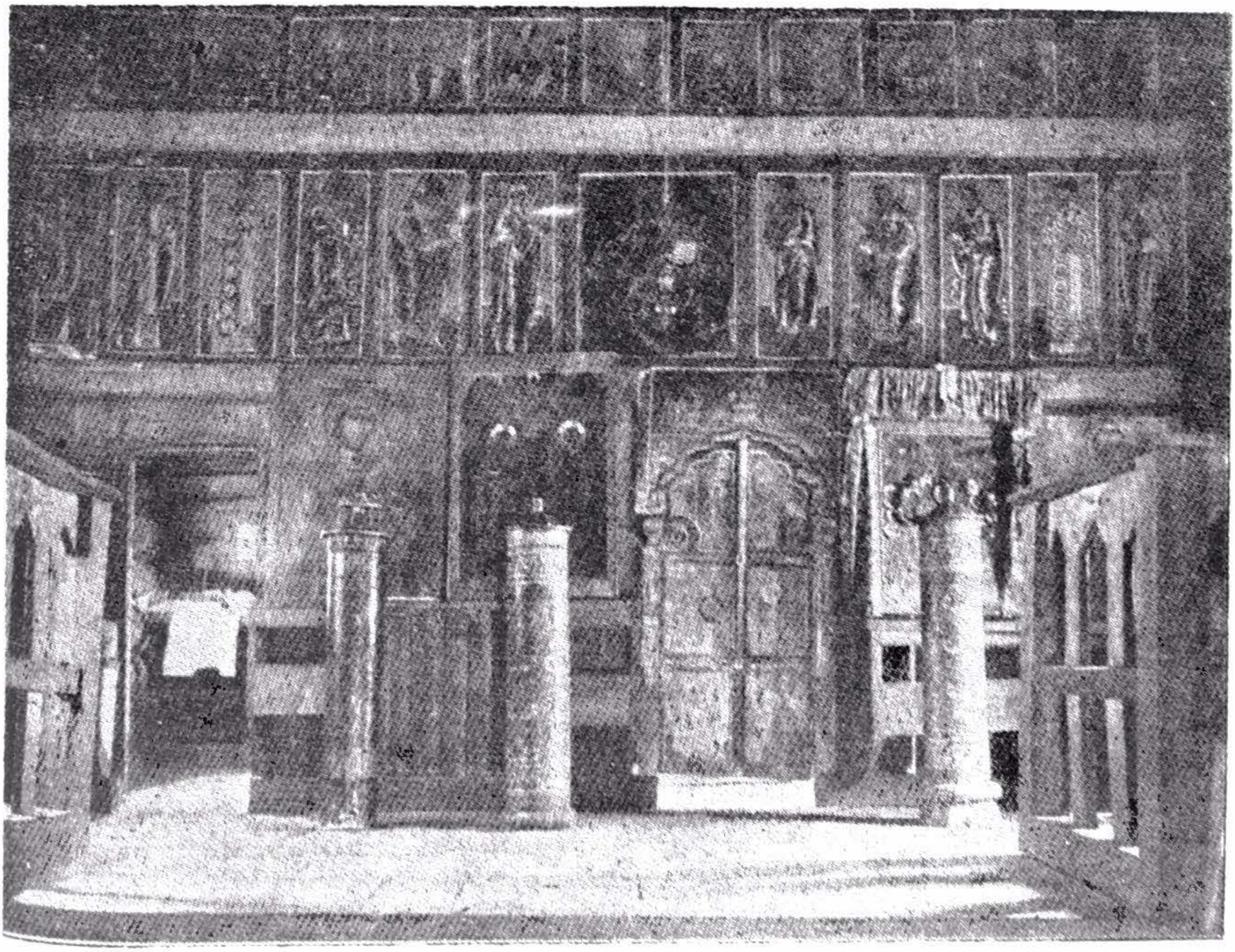
Only after eight days, on March 28, did the brethren who had returned from hiding find the body of St. Euphrosynus and give it over with honor to the earth, next to the Cross by which he had been martyred. All the inhabitants of those parts who revered the virtuous life of the Saint gathered for the burial. On the same day they buried the monk Jonah and the others who had died by the swords of the Latins.

In the monastery annals there was preserved an exact description of the outward appearance of St. Euphrosynus: he was of medium height, had wide shoulders and a broad chest; his hair was brown, adorned with gray, and he had a rather long beard which divided into two at the end.

Five years after the Saints repose the monastery was rebuilt, and these beautiful structures were cherished with love for all the centuries after. In 1655, with the blessing of Metropolitan Macarius of Novgorod, the relics of St. Euphrosynus were uncovered, found to be completely incorrupt, and before

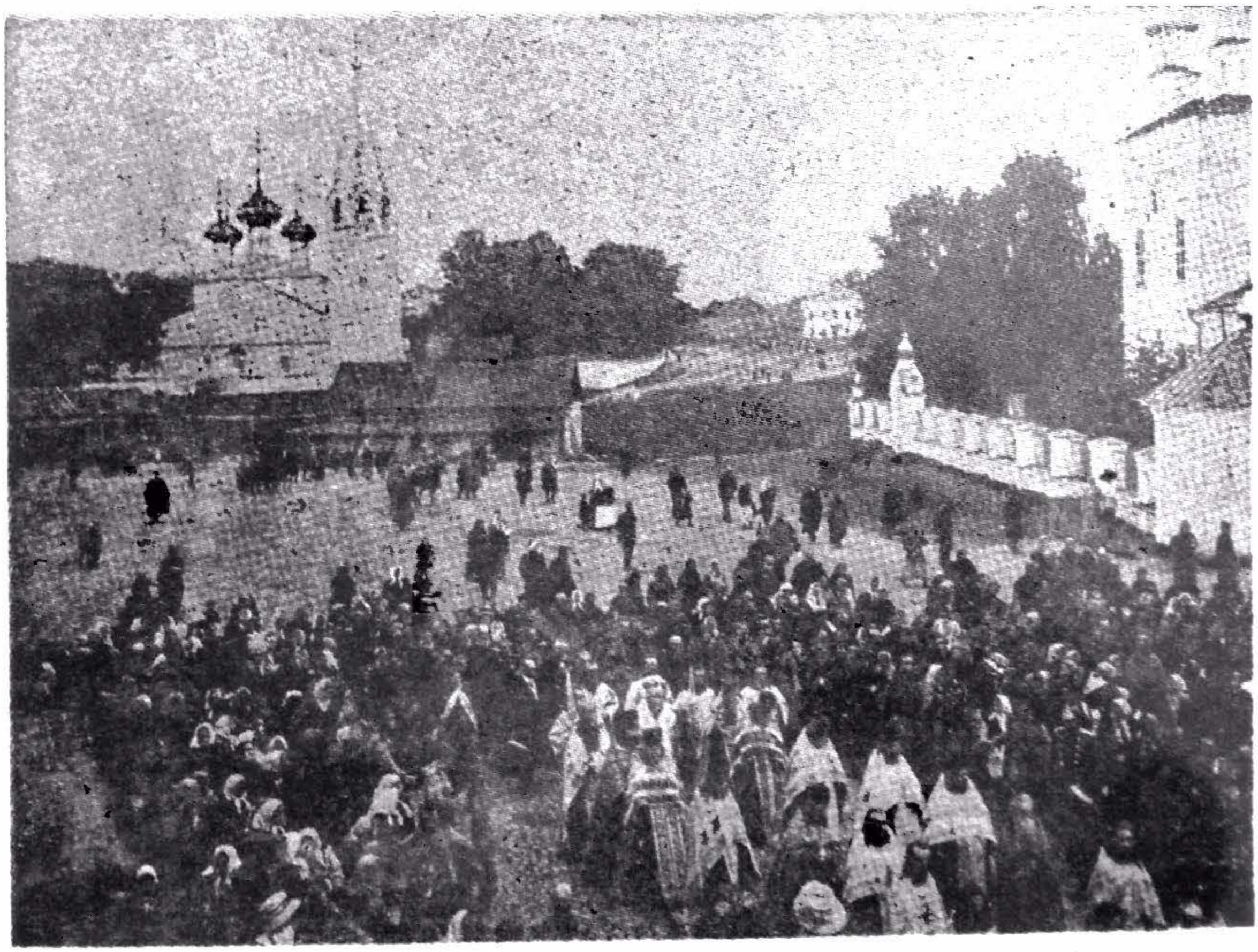


The belfry and the churches of St. John the Theologian and the Annunciation



The Iconostasis of the 17th-century church of the Annunciation

The reliquary of St. Euphrosynus,
located in the belfry-chapel
of St. Nicholas



The beginning of the services of glorification in 1912: The Procession starts in the town of Ustiuzhna, where St. Euphrosynus served as a Reader

a great multitude of the faithful there was solemnly performed the translation of his holy relics to a new reliquary. The relics were buried under the belfry and an elaborate reliquary was placed above them. The old Schema in which he had been buried was removed and a new one put on. A church service was composed in his honor, only fragments of which have come down to us. Icons were painted of him, including one presented to the monastery by the monarch himself, Tsar Alexei Mihailovich Romanov.

There have been many remarkable miracles and signs testifying to the Saint's unquestionable sanctity. Some of these comprise an appendix to the original Life written by the monk Jonah. A later more detailed work by the priest Iakovsevsky (*The Life and Miracles of St. Euphrosynus,* Novgorod, 1901), lists 27 healings, while other collections of miracles, still unpublished by the time of the re-establishment of his veneration in 1912, only emphasize the undeniability of his sanctity.

In 1764, however, during the persecution of monasticism, when two-thirds of all monasteries in Russia were forcibly closed by Catherine II, services to St. Euphrosynus were forbidden to be celebrated and were replaced by memorial services, and the monastery was closed. After this the local inhabitants often appealed to the Church Authorities for the re-establishment of his veneration as a glorified Saint. Finally, in 1912, Metropolitan Arsenius of Novgorod, himself a great lover of the ancient true Orthodox traditions, triumphantly re-established the veneration of St. Euphrosynus, as described below.

THE DAYS OF JUNE 25th to 29th, 1912, will be long remembered as days of a special spiritual solemnity: June 29 was the day designated for the triumphant glorification of the Monk-martyr Euphrosynus of Blue Jay Lake, who had been martyred 300 years earlier by the Latins during the terrible "time of troubles."

This spiritual solemnity was headed by Archbishop Arsenius of Novgorod himself. On the way to the Blue Jay Lake Hermitage, the Archbishop visited all the churches from Borovich to the city of Ustiuzhna, coming to the latter city on June 25. After the triumphal meeting of the bishop at the Cathedral, with a great number of people present, the Archbishop visited several churches and the seminary.

Five o'clock in the afternoon of this day was the time designated for the coming together of the processions with all the holy objects of the local churches and monasteries; they were to meet at the Ustiuzhna Cathedral in order to set out the next morning for Blue Jay Lake. These processions came

from the Modensk Monastery, the Philaretus and Shalocha Hermitages, and the church at Chiretsk, which were on the way of the processions as they went toward the city from the villages.

The city-dwellers and peasants from nearby villages came in multitudes toward the Kazan Cemetery, where the first coming together of the separate processions was to take place. From beyond the forest appeared banners and a great crowd of pilgrims, over the head of whom were holy icons shining in the sun. The procession was accompanied by the Abbot of the Modensk Monastery, together with a hieromonk and a hierodeacon, and the choir from the Chiretsk church. In front were the singers, and behind them the clergy. On the way Akathists were read and sung, the priests dividing the reading among themselves.

Here the first joining of the processions occurred, and it was very moving. Many wept at the sight of such a solemnity. Many came out of their houses to accompany the procession a mile or two and, being attracted by the religious fervor of those present, walked to the city itself, nine miles away. This was a true example of a solemn procession with everyone singing, in the best Orthodox Church tradition.

In the square before the church of Ustiuzhna, the cathedral clergy had gathered with their holy objects, the miracle-working icons, and here a crowd of thousands of people waited for the processions to arrive.

The moleben began. It was sung by the choir of the Chiretsk church, which was joined by others among the people, and in the end everyone was singing. Then a priest gave a sermon of greeting to the pilgrims. Exactly at sir o'clock the Cathedral bell sounded. After the meeting of the Archbishop, the triumphant All-night Vigil began.

The Divine service proceeded with special solemnity, the choir repeating the stichera phrase by phrase after the canonarch. All were caught up in the spirit of the service. The All-night Vigil ended only at 11 p.m.

On June 26, at 7 a.m., the bell sounded for the Divine Liturgy, which was celebrated early so that the people could accompany the procession, which was to leave early and spend the night at the village of Mizga, on the way to Blue Jay Lake. The Liturgy proceeded triumphantly, followed by a moleben of thanksgiving, with everyone singing the Creed, the "Meet it is," and the "Our Father." At the Liturgy the Archbishop gave an instructive sermon.

After the Liturgy, the moleben was served on the square outside the Cathedral, and then the procession got under way with a crowd of many thousands following. Here one of the many lakes of the region had to be crossed. Having made the sign of the Cross in all four directions with the Holy Cross, the Archbishop with bared head went under the icon that was being held and

got on the barge and blessed those who were following the procession. The Archbishop stood in prayer until the barge reached the opposite shore. And there a crowd of thousands was already waiting so as to begin the rest of the journey.

The stop for the night was at the village of Mizga, 16 miles from Ustiuzhna. On June 27 in Mizga, the missionary Archimandrite Barsanuphius served the Liturgy and then, at the first hour of the day, the procession again got under way, going to the village of Doloska, where St. Euphrosynus had first served as a Reader. Here the procession was joined by processions from Okhona, Kyrovo, and other places. Archbishop Arsenius served the All-night Vigil in the church of Doloska. The evening was quiet and clear, and the service was wondrous and triumphant. Everyone felt that the Archpastor and the people were of one heart, praying and thanking the Lord with one mouth for His unutterable mercy. At the Magnification of Matins the Archbishop went outside the church. A crowd of several thousand people surrounded him and stood with lit candles. It was so calm that the flames of the candles did not even waver. The All-night Vigil ended about midnight, but no one felt tired, and the spirit of fervent prayer took hold of everyone.

On June 28 the Divine Liturgy was celebrated by the Archbishop. After the Liturgy the Archpastor blessed the procession to continue its way.

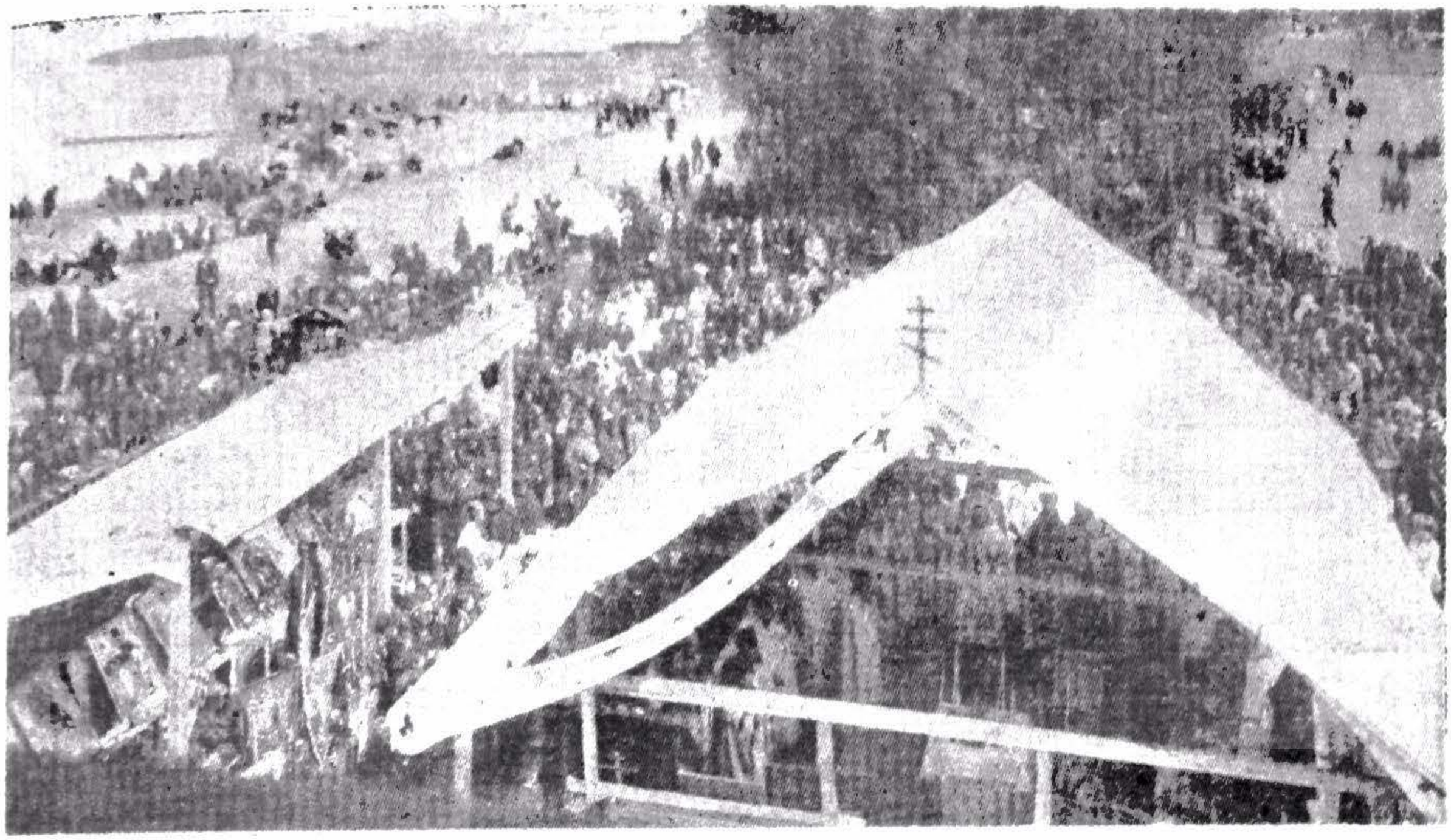
At the village of Doloska the hospitable landowner of this area received the Archbishop, the Governor, and all the clergy at his estate. For the banner-carriers and pilgrims some roofed estate buildings were set apart, and tea and meals were prepared for the whole time that the pilgrims were in Doloska.

On June 28, at about 3 p.m., the Archbishop arrived at Blue Jay Lake Hermitage. His entry was triumphant. Bishop Joannicius of Kirilov arrived also, and he was met by a procession from Doloska which came to the Hermitage at about 5 o'clock. This same evening, the All-night Vigil was celebrated in the open air. Archbishop Arsenius celebrated together with the archimandrites and priests who had come with the processions. The weather was warm and calm. All the clergy, with the Archbishop at their head, were placed on a specially-built platform under a tent roof. Ten thousand pilgrims had gathered for this solemnity, and they took a most active part in it. All along the platform there were rows of hundreds of banners and the chief icons of the churches of the region. In front, on the platform, the holy objects were placed — the wonderworking Icons of the Mother of God and St. Nicholas, and the locally-venerated icons. The All-night Vigil ended about midnight. Archpriest Peter Seeling gave a fiery sermon, and his fervent faith in his own local Saint was involuntarily transmitted to the whole people.

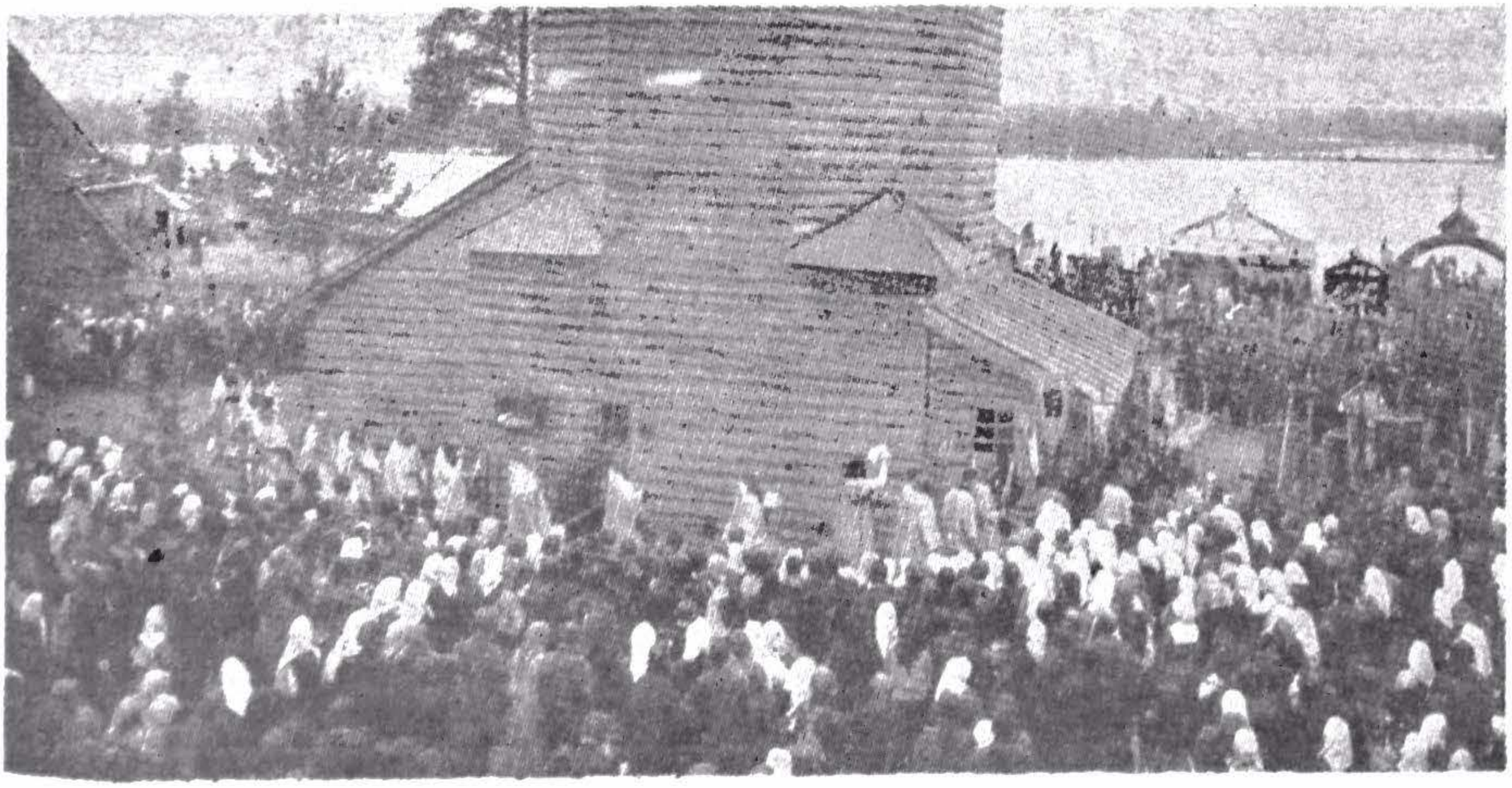
The next day, June 29, was the day of the commemoration of the Chief Apostles, Peter and Paul, and the early Liturgies were celebrated in the local churches of the Blue Jay Lake Hermitage before a multitude of pilgrims and communicants. The triumphant late Liturgy was celebrated in the open air. The holy Altar-table was placed on the platform. The Liturgy was celebrated by Archbishop Arsenius, together with Bishop Joannicius and the archimandrites and other clergy. The service was distinguished by a special solemnity. The weather was favorable. The heavens themselves seemed to be rejoicing with the people.

The end of the service drew near. Greetings were read and gifts accepted from distant monasteries. All that was lacking was the participation of the heavenly elements of rain, thunder and lightning — and they were not slow in manifesting themselves. From the south a cloud appeared; a wind sprang up, and from this little cloud a large cloud was formed; lightning flashed, thunder roared, and a great and blessed rain fell. The Archbishop finished his sermon to the people and began to conclude the Divine service. The approach of the elements was so unexpected for the people, who were dressed as for a feast, that the faint-hearted were disturbed, and many began to go home. At this moment one had to admire the Archpastor of Novgorod. Suddenly he turned to the people, demanding that they stop immediately and continue to participate in the prayers that followed. His eyes were filled with anger, and his thunderous voice drowned out the noise of the elements. The people came to their senses, obeyed the voice of their Archpastor, and, despite the fact that the elements roared with yet greater power during the procession around the place where St. Euphrosynus had been martyred, still the people walked behind their Archpastor and prayed fervently. At the end of the moleben, the storm suddenly became quiet, and within two hours there was wondrous, clear weather. From this it is apparent that the hand of God gave an evident proof to the people that at the glorification of Saints not only men but also all the elements rejoice, and each of them in its own special way expresses its joy and its thanksgiving to the Creator, the Lord.

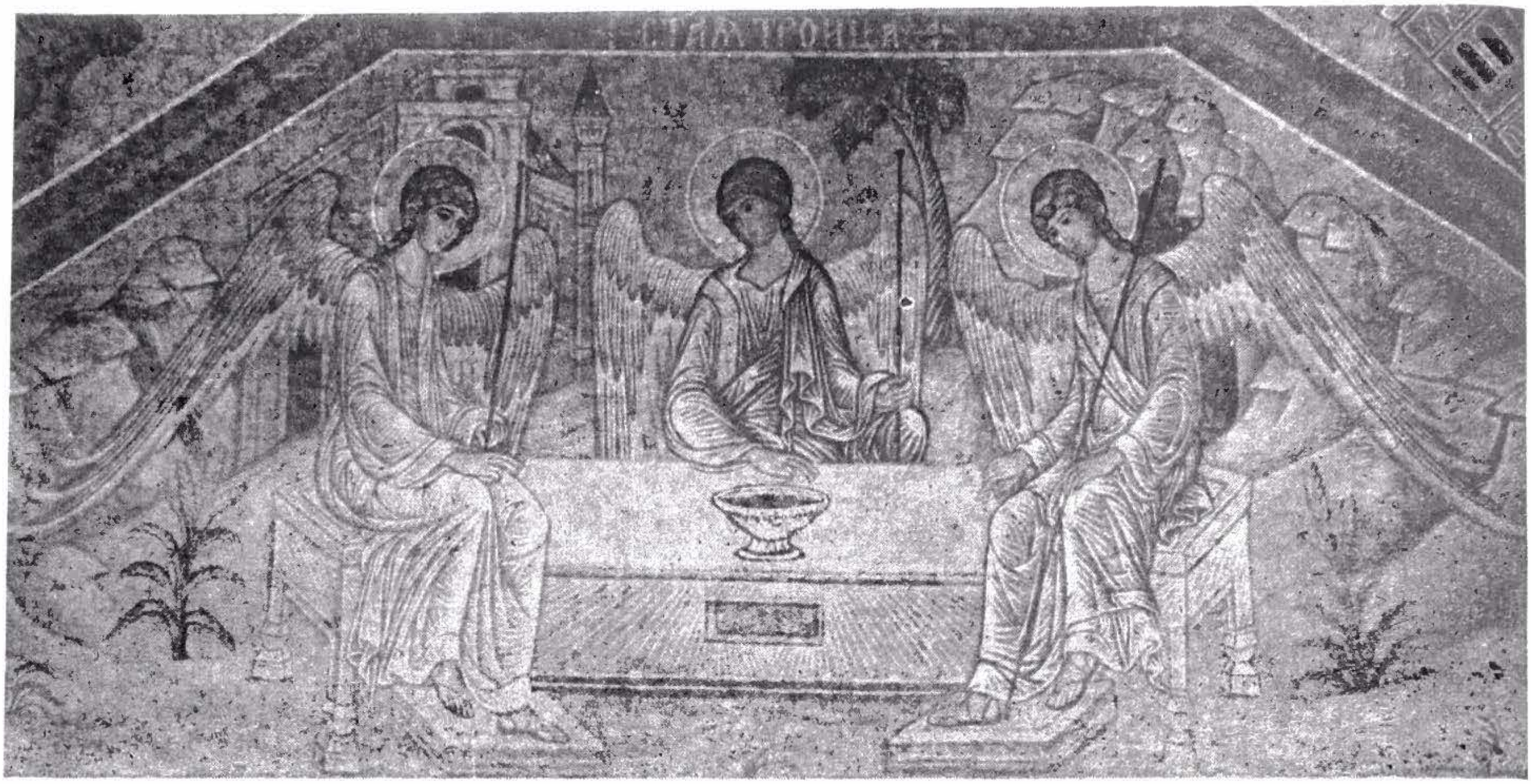
Wondrous moments were experienced in these days by everyone who gathered for the glorification of God's Saint, Euphrosynus. Wonderworker of Blue Jay Lake. It was evident to all that Holy Russia was still alive, and that love for God's Saints still burned in the hearts of the Orthodox people. If St. Euphrosynus unjustly suffered neglect for a time, let the glory of his sanctity now shine all the brighter among those who truly love God, so wondrous in His Saints!



The Divine Liturgy outdoors (under the tent at right), celebrated at Blue Jay Lake Hermitage on June 29, 1912, by Archbishop Arsenius of Novgorod



The Procession with the Holy Gifts around the belfry where the holy relics of St. Euphrosynus were located



ICON OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY, BY PIMEN SOFRONOV

IN COURSE OF TIME English-speaking Orthodox will doubtless evolve a musical tradition of their own," write the translators of the best collection of the texts of the Orthodox Divine services yet to be published in English,* "which will take its place alongside those of Greece, Russia, and the other Orthodox nations. As yet no such tradition has had time to develop; and Orthodox of English language must therefore draw for the present upon some existing musical heritage within Orthodoxy. The best adapted for this purpose seems to be that of Russia. Byzantine chant is too intricate: if it is to be used, then the stress and rhythm of the Greek original must be preserved almost exactly in English translation, and this raises insuperable difficulties. But Russian music is far more flexible; and in particular the simpler Russian monastic chants can easily be adapted to an English text. We have kept this possibility in mind as we made our translations."

This may come as something of a surprise to one who has heard the magnificent choirs of some of the Russian cathedrals, whether in Russia or abroad, with their elaborate renditions of recently-composed melodies; where is the "simple monastic chant" to be found in anything so complicated? In fact, however, a large part of what is sung even by cathedral choirs is merely a harmonization of more or less intact traditional melodies, and the basic tradition of Russian church music is indeed a simple chant. It is nevertheless true that the simplicity and expressiveness of the traditional liturgical chant are not often heard today, and the return to the use of this chant is an important part of Orthodox zealotry. Fortunately, in this as in the other aspects of Orthodox zealotry — traditional iconography, patristic theology, monastic spirituality, etc.

* Archimandrite Kallistos Ware and Mother Mary, *The Festal Menaion,* Faber and Faber, London, 1969, p. 13.

The TYPICON of the Orthodox Church's Divine Services

CHAPTER THREE
THE RUSSIAN TRADITION OF ORTHODOX CHANT

— the standard has already been set for us in the great flowering of traditional Orthodoxy in 19th-century Russia, and there is no need for us to speculate upon a lost tradition. The tradition of Russian liturgical chant is still alive, and there are books which contain its musical notation. A little study of the Russian traditional chant will reveal that it is not at all difficult to begin singing it (there being no "parts" to learn), and that it is admirably suited to the needs of the present-day Orthodox mission, affording the opportunity even for those with very little musical knowledge to take part in the Orthodox Divine services and thereby to be spiritually uplifted and enriched.

A brief history of Orthodox chant in Russia is presented in the introduction to one standard collection of notes for traditional chant, *The Psalmists' Companion,* which was published in three editions in pre-Revolutionary Russia (up to 1916) and was reprinted abroad by Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, New York, in 1959 (second reprinting, 1971).

"The basic ecclesiastical chant which has been accepted by the Russian Church as the most faithful expression of the religious feelings of the praying Christian was worked on and poured out into a definitive form over the course of whole centuries; millions of people have sung it and trained their feelings in it... After the baptism of the holy Russian Prince Vladimir, the Russian land received the Orthodox Christian Faith from the Church of Byzantium — Greece — and together with the Faith it received the chant which was used in the Byzantine Greek Church, that is, the chant of the Eight Tones (Octoechos) which was brought into final form by St. John Damascene.

"The original Russian ecclesiastical chant which has been preserved in manuscripts beginning with the 11th and 12th centuries is known by the name of 'Great Znamenny Chant,' a name which it received from the 'signs' in which the musical notation was written without use of lines... From the 11th to the 17th centuries in Russia there was no chant except for the Znamenny... At the end of the 16th century the Great Znamenny Chant began to change and become simplified. This occurred independently in the north and in the south of Russia. In the north the simplified Znamenny Chant received the name 'Lesser Znamenny,' and in the south, 'Kievan.' In the second half of the 17th century to these chants were added those received from Orthodox countries: 'Greek' and 'Bulgarian' Chant... A yet more simplified and abbreviated

form of the Kievan, Greek, and Bulgarian Chants is known by the name of 'Ordinary Chant.' In addition, each locality may have its own local Ordinary Chant with special local variations...

"The original form of Russian ecclesiastical chant was *monophonic* (unisonal). All the ancient manuscript notes for church music that have been preserved are only for one voice. Choral harmony was introduced into the practice of the Russian Church only in the 17th century, when the Church Authority, in the absence of any explicit directions regarding this in the Church's Typicon, addressed the Eastern Patriarchs with a question concerning the permissibility of introducing harmonized singing into church practice; in 1668 a document permitting this was received from the Patriarchs. At the present time in the Russian Church it is permitted to use not only harmonized versions of the ancient chants, but also newly-composed works...

"Nonetheless, the basic hymnody of the Orthodox Russian Church remains, as before, the ancient hymnody of the Eight Tones, which is preserved in the Znamenny, Kievan, Greek and Bulgarian Chants."

One of the leading zealots for the restoration of the traditional Russian chant, which had become obscured owing to the fascination with choral music in the 18th and 19th centuries, was Metropolitan Arsenius of Novgorod, the New Martyr, who convoked several Conventions of church music teachers just before the Revolution and sponsored the publication of *The Psalmist's Companion.* In another part of the introduction to this book he himself speaks of the need to return to the true Orthodox tradition of hymnody in the Russian Church:

"Go through the whole series of stichera in the Octoechos and the Triodia which are appointed for the feast days, and you will see what a rich treasure this is, which has been given to us as a testament from the Greek Church by her great chief hierarchs, the preservers of her dogmas and traditions, the skillful creators of her order of Divine services. And the people love to sing, read, and hear them, because the soul of the people draws from them instruction concerning the chief dogmas of the Christian faith. In the first centuries of Christianity they served as the chief weapon in the battle against the heretical teachings of the sectarians, who also used this means to spread their teachings among the people, by means of hymns and songs in their prayer meetings. The same means are used in our times also by the teachers of various mystical and rationalistic sects, who compose their own hymns in the form of incompetent adaptations from a foreign model. After this, can we disdain in our times this powerful means for the knowledge of the Faith and the repelling of every kind of sectarianism?...

"We have forgotten the very foundation of church singing: the Eight Tones. The Higher Ecclesiastical Authority in the person of the Holy Synod, as well as individual hierarchs, has fought from the beginning of the 19th century, and continues to fight, against this decline of church singing... Little by little we had lost the taste for the ancient chants... Not too long ago in Russian society a new interest in the ancient ecclesiastical chant was uncovered. Russian society has begun to understand that the only durable culture is one erected on the stable foundation of the past. Now schools have been opened to teach the ancient chants... But each one of us also must work in his own place so as to arouse interest in this chant."

And so, in fulfillment of this aim of the best tradition of Russian Orthodoxy, which has been reaffirmed by the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Church Outside of Russia, let us in the Orthodox missionary field also strive to know and to arouse zeal for the authentic chant of Russian Orthodoxy. The present time is ideal for this, in that the missionary movement in English is little developed as yet and its communities are generally small, facts which facilitate the use of the traditional chant, which is so much simpler than the modern choral renditions of Russian church music. One need not, to be sure, adopt a tone of "super-zealousness" and condemn the common choral renditions as "un-Orthodox," "uncanonical," or whatever. It is enough to begin to know and to love the authentic ancient chant, perhaps at first in one of its simpler forms of recent centuries, and to keep in mind that, as Metropolitan Arsenius has noted, "in the hymns of the Divine services we must give preference to the melodic line above harmony: the latter pleases, but it does not evoke a prayerful attitude. With singing where the melody is emphasized, there is as it were a prayerful silence in church. Not so when harmony is emphasized."

Those who advocate today a return to the ancient Russian chant do not insist on the absolute abolition of harmony in all cases, but only point out the monophonic ideal of traditional Russian church music, and also note that not only is harmony foreign to the spirit of this music, but even the particular form of harmony used in church music today is purely a product of the Western musical tradition and is quite different, for example, from the harmony employed in Russian folksongs. Leading scholars of the traditional chant have suggested a simplification, particularly in the conditions of the Russian Diaspora, whereby 3-part or even 2-part harmony would be used by church choirs, with the second voice following parallel to the melody a third above or below it, thereby abolishing any element of arbitrariness in the harmony.* Monophony, of course, always remains the ideal, and even those whose ear has long been accustomed to harmony can sense the great beauty and power especially of the most ancient Znamenny Chant when it is properly sung monophonically. A number of pre-Revolutionary Russian churches preserved the monophonic tradition when singing Znamenny Chant, and even the Moscow Synodal Choir sang this Chant in unison.

The musical notation of Russian church chant which we shall give in later chapters will be for one voice only—the melodic line, which is the only part of the Church's musical tradition that has been handed down from the earliest times. The notation itself is not that of the standard music books of the modern West, but rather that of the official Moscow Synodal books of music which was used in the Russian Church from the 16th century until the Revolution. With a few words of explanation, this system of notation will be seen to be actually much simpler than the standard musical notation of today, and it is also better capable of expressing some characteristics of traditional Orthodox chant which do not exist in modern Western music.

Next Issue: The Musical Notation of Traditional Russian Chant.

* See, for example, A. A. Swan, "Russian Church Singing," in *Orthodox Way* for 1952 (Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, N.Y.), page 151; and I. Gardner, "On the Synodal Books of Notes for the Divine Services," *Orthodox Way* for 1971, pp. 114-5. (Both in Rusian.)

Righteous Girls Vera and Lyubov

THE ACTUAL FOUNDRESSES OF THE RENOWNED SHAMORDINO CONVENT OF STARETZ AMBROSE

By BISHOP NIKODIM OF BELGOROD*

ABOUT EIGHT MILES from Optina Monastery in the heart of Russia is the village of Shamordino. Less than a mile from it there lived in the mid-19th century an old man, a poor landowner named Basil Kalygin, together with his aged wife. Once he saw in a vision that on his property there was a church in the clouds. When he visited the Optina Skete, the Elder Ambrose persuaded him to sell his property to the monastery. The money for this purchase, with the Elder's blessing, was given by a nun, Ambrosia Klyuchareva. At first the Elder was uncertain what to do with the land, but then, speaking with Mother Ambrosia, he told her: "Well, it looks as if it is your lot to have this property for yourself. You will live there as in a dacha, with your granddaughters; and perhaps," he added in order to console her, "we also will come to visit you."

Mother Ambrosia had an only son who had been married. His first wife died shortly after giving birth to twin daughters, Vera and Lyubov. Their father married another woman, and these half-orphans remained in the care of their grandmother and lived with her. Their godfather, according to the wish of Mother Ambrosia, was the Elder Ambrose, who was extraordinarily concerned over them In order to take care of her granddaughters in the future, Mother Ambrosia, with the blessing of the Elder, decided to leave them this property. Soon she moved there with her granddaughters and her household servants. This same summer of 1872 Staretz Ambrose came to visit her and look at the locality. At this time he blessed her to build a new building for herself and the sister-novices (her former serfs), of whom there were already

* *Lives of the Ascetics of the 18th and 19th Centuries,* October volume, pp. 238-244 (in Russian). Concerning the confessing spirit of Shamordino Convent and its closure, see *The Orthodox Word,* 1972, no. 4 (45), p. 165.

of Shamordino

STARETZ AMBROSE OF OPTINA

quite a number; and at the same time he said: "We will have a monastery here." Thereafter the Elder would visit this place with his cell-attendant once each summer. It is remarkable that the large living-room in the new house, by order of the Elder, occupied the east part of the building, while the cells for her granddaughters were on the north side, which displeased Mother Ambrosia. Later Elder Ambrose recalled: "She was building a house for the children, but what we needed was a church." Soon other women began to join the community, under the influence of Mother Ambrosia's piety, and the life even then was very similar to monastic life.

Mother Ambrosia was very concerned to give her granddaughters a good secular education. Thus, when the children had begun to grow up, she asked the Elder's blessing to obtain for them a French governess and to give them better clothes. But to the distress of Mother Ambrosia. the Elder refused to give his blessing. Mother Ambrosia did not understand the Elder, but made a great effort to be obedient to his counsel.

The girls, however, were already leading an ascetic life. Their abstinence was such that they already refused to eat meat, and they ate it only at the order of the Elder. They prayed often. They loved very much the long Optina church services and knew the order of services so well that they themselves would celebrate the All-night Vigil together with the responses of the priest. When the grandmother expressed her concern about this, the Elder said: "Let them pray; they are in poor health." She did not understand the Elder's prevision. To others the Elder spoke openly: "Let them be; they know that they are preparing to go *there*."

Mother Ambrosia, being concerned for the temporal future of her granddaughters, with the blessing and counsel of Staretz Ambrose, acquired

near the new property yet another estate, Rudnovo, and then two more estates, without herself understanding the real purpose of the Elder — why he had advised her to buy forests adjoining the new estate from all sides, as if he were going to build a whole city. Mother Ambrosia also designated a large part of her own capital for her granddaughters, under the condition that in case of their unexpected death, a convent would be built on their estate, near the village of Shamordino, and the three other estates which had been acquired, together with the capital, would serve for the building of this community. This was done by her at the advice of the Elder, who had foreseen the approaching death of the children.

In 1881 Mother Ambrosia died, and her estates and capital went by inheritance to her two granddaughters, who were then ten years old. Together with their governesses and the novices, they continued to live as before in the same house.

Another year passed. The girls as before lived in simplicity. Quiet and meek, they loved each other dearly and were never parted. They never made noise like other children. They dressed simply. They loved to attend the long monastery services, and to live the quiet, solitary monastic life. From time to time they went for walks with their pious governesses, who now took the place of their own mother, and they occupied themselves less with learning than with preparation for the future life. The spark of Divine love burned ever more clearly in the hearts of the Elder's goddaughters. They did not have long to live, but they did not fear death. Many times they said to their governesses: "We do not wish to live more than 12 years; what is there good in this life?"

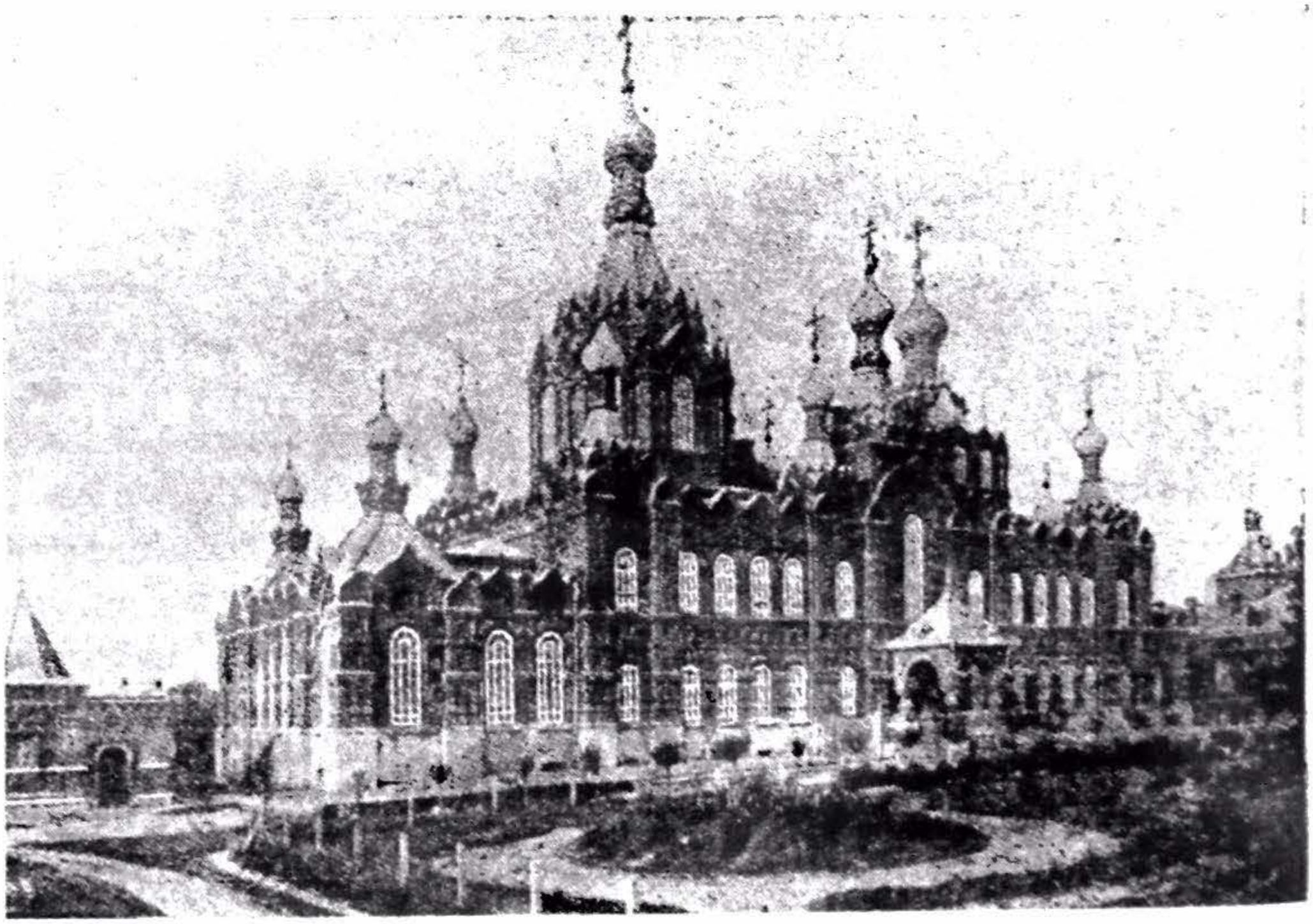
It is believed that they had been forewarned by the Elder about their approaching death, and through his spiritual instructions they were being prepared for it ahead of time. But such a life did not please their father. He decided to place them in a boarding school. Staretz Ambrose did not oppose this. With his blessing the girls were placed in the Orlov boarding school, where the headmistress at that time was a certain kind-hearted, pious woman who was devoted to Staretz Ambrose. Having studied there for the winter, they were to leave the boarding school for the summer vacation. The father intended to take them into his own home so that he might begin to acquaint them with worldly life, and he had already rented an estate for them. But all this was not according to the heart of the piously-inclined children. and with all their soul they wished to be in Optina under the protection of their godfather, Staretz Ambrose, whom they dearly loved. And the All-good Lord heeded the desire of their hearts and so arranged it that, with the permission of their father, they went first to Optina to see the Elder. This was in the spring

THE RIGHTEOUS GIRLS VERA AND LYUBOV
Commemorated on June 4

of 1883. After coming to Optina, on May 31, the girls suddenly became ill with diphtheria, first one and then the other. So that one might not become more infected by the other, they were separated, being placed in separate rooms. Both were given confession and communion of the Holy Mysteries of Christ, and the end was evidently at hand.

While they still had the strength, the girls often wrote little notes to the Elder, asking his holy prayers and his blessing. On June 4 Vera died. The novices who were looking after both the sick girls said nothing about this

The greeting of Staretz Ambrose by the nuns upon his arrival



The main church of Staretz Ambrose's Shamordino Convent

to Lyubov, who was still alive, fearing to disturb her and thus hasten the hour of her death. But Lyubov, who had been sleeping, suddenly awoke and asked the sister who was sitting next to her: "Did Vera die?" Vera's nurse was going to say that she was still alive, but the girl quickly said: "How is she alive? My governess just told me that she has died." But there was no governess here at all. And so she remained firm in her opinion.

On June 8 Lyubov herself left this present much-sorrowing life, joining her dear Vera, so that just as they had been born together and grown up together, so also they might stand together before the face of the heavenly Bridegroom Who loved them. Seven years before this Staretz Ambrose had told a certain Mrs. Shishkov about their approaching death.

By the terms of the last testament of the reposed Mother Ambrosia, a women's monastic community was now to begin. All those who had been living with the girls, thirty people in all, constituted the first monastic settlers. In addition, Staretz Ambrose transferred some of his spiritual daughters there from the Belev Convent and named Sophia Mihailovna Astafieva as the first Abbess.

Thus it was immediately after the repose of the righteous girls Vera and Lyubov, long before the official opening of the Convent, that the community began to grow greatly. There were many widows, blind and deaf women, cripples and orphans who needed help, and Staretz Ambrose now was able to take in all these unfortunate ones. Before his death there were already fifty little girl orphans in the Convent's orphanage, over a hundred cripples, and an old-age home for women in the monastery enclosure. By 1908 there was a hospital with free treatment, and a large pilgrims' hospice. And there were over seven hundred nuns

Years before, when Staretz Ambrose was visiting the Klyucharov estate for the first time, entering the house, he saw in the living-room a large Icon of the Kazan Mother of God. He stopped before it, looked at it for a long time, and finally said: "Your Kazan Mother of God Icon is undoubtedly a miracle-working one; pray to Her and cherish it." The first house-church in the new Klyucharov estate was dedicated to this very Icon, and therefore the newly-opened Convent was likewise named in honor of the Kazan Icon.

Thus the righteous girls Vera and Lyubov, whose names in Russian signify two major Christian virtues, Faith and Love, brought forth an abundant fruit and solace to so many needy human sous.

Righteous Girls Vera and Lyubov, pray for us!

ORTHODOX BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE GULAG ARCHIPELAGO (Vol. 1), by Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn. Harper & Row, New York, 1974. 660 pages, hardcover $12.50, paperback $1.95.

THE DISCOVERY of one manuscript of this book in 1973 by the Soviet Secret Police, and its subsequent publication abroad by the author, were the immediate causes of the expulsion of Solzhenitsyn from the Soviet Union early this year. The subject of the book is the Soviet slave-labor system from 1918 to 1956 (the system, of course, continues to exist today), based on the author's own 11-year experience of it as well as on information carefully recorded from others who have lived through it. "Gulag" is an acronym for "Chief Administration of Corrective Labor Camps," which is in charge of most of this system, and it is conceived by the author as an "archipelago" or series of "islands" (camps, prisons, detention centers, etc.) which are spread through the whole of the Russian land like a country within a country. Basically there is nothing new here for anyone who is familiar with the literature on this subject in the free world, whether in Russian, English, or other languages.* The distinction of *The Gulag Archipelago* is to have presented for the first time the whole panorama and history of this phenomenon, complete with many actual names, dates, and places—and with such literary skill that it is brought to life before the reader in all its hideous reality. Although it is strictly "non-fiction," it is perhaps the most powerful literary work of the 20th century; but even more than this, the book is a major spiritual document of our times.

There is no need to quote the often sickening details of this reality, which some even now will prefer to regard as "incredible," "exceptional," or at least "a thing of the (Stalinist) past"; the reader may obtain the book himself in order to find out what "real life" is like in the USSR for that five per cent or more of the population (Solzhenitsyn guesses the number to be twelve million) which, *at any given time,* is in the slave-labor camps or on the way to them. (The number appears to be less at the present time, but the treatment remains the same.) Here it will be sufficient to give a brief outline of the book, which is actually quite a calm and objective account of the remarkable Soviet slave-labor system.

* See, for example, in English: David J. Dallin and Boris I. Nicolaevsky, *Forced Labor in Soviet Russia,* Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, Conn., 1947 (4th printing, 1955), 331 pp. John H. Noble, *I Found God in Soviet Russia,* St. Martin's, NY, 1959, 192 pp. A. Alexander, *In the Name of Humanity,* 1959. Anatoly Marchenko, *My Testimony* (about the state of the Soviet camps in the late 1960's), 1969. In Russian: M. Rozanov, *Zavoevatelyi Belykh Pyaten,* Possev Publ., 1951, 290 pp. (with maps). Ivan Solonevich, *Rossiya v Kontzlagere,* Washington, DC, 5th ed., 1958, 512 pp. Y.B. Margolin, *Puteshestvie v stranu ze-ka,* Chekhov Publ., NY, 1952, 414 pp. M.Z. Nikonov-Smorogdin, *Krasnaya Katorga,* NTS Publ., 1938, 372 pp. R.V. Ivanov-Razumnik, *Tyurmy i Sylki,* Chekhov Publ., 1954, 412 pp. Boris Shiryaev, *Neugasimaya Lampada,* Chekhov Publ., 1954, 408 pp.

The whole book is divided into seven parts in three volumes. Part I describes "The Prison Industry" from arrest to sentencing, all of it a prelude to incarceration in the camps. Here we learn that "the *Gulag* country begins right next to us, two yards away from us" (p. 4) (i.e., in the nearest installation of the Secret Police), and it is not meant for criminals either. Those who are aware know that "every honest man is sure to go to prison" in the USSR (p. 12), whether singly or in "waves," as when "a quarter of the entire city" of Leningrad was arrested (p. 13). Spies and secret police are everywhere, and no one can be trusted. "You are arrested by a religious pilgrim whom you have put up for the night 'for the sake of Christ.' You are arrested by a meterman who has come to read your electric meter. You are arrested by a bicyclist who has run into you on the street, by a railway conductor, a taxi driver, a savings bank teller, the manager of a movie theater... They'll take you right off the operating table" (p. 10).

And there need be no "reason" for arrest. One may be arrested for not listening to the radio, for listening to music and sipping tea, for possessing a radio tube, for expressing a desire to have a sack of flour, for baking your own bread, for speaking to someone or shaking his hand, for thinking, and of course for the major crimes of belief in God or "Praise of American Technology." "Should we wrap it all up and simply say that they arrested the *innocent?*" (p. 76.)

Chapter 2 of Part I gives the "History of Our Sewage Disposal System," the author's poetic term for the slave system, showing that this system has been in operation not just in some spectacular year when multiple millions of victims were washing down the drain of society into the camps, but that it has been operating *constantly* from 1917 to the present day, with wave after wave of thousands and millions of victims.

Chapter 3, "The Interrogation," contains a selected list of 31 of the chief tortures employed in order to make people confess to "crimes" they have not committed. "What had already been regarded as barbarism under Peter the Great... was all being practiced during the flowering of the glorious twentieth century--in a society based on socialist principles... not by one scoundrel alone, but by tens of thousands of specially trained beasts standing over millions of defenseless victims" (p. 94). "For the first time in history the calculated torture of millions was being undertaken" (p. 102). In this and other chapters the author ironically compares the Soviet system with the much more lenient system of Nazi Germany and the incomparably more humane Tsarist treatment of criminals, documenting each point.

Chapter 4 examines the "Bluecaps," members of the Secret Police, and the absolute and arbitrary power they wield in Soviet society.

Chapter 5 describes the author's "First Cell," where he began to realize that "prison was not an abyss for me, but the most important turning point in my life" (p. 187). Here he began to know the joy of meeting kindred souls without having the constant fear of being spied upon that Russians in "freedom" have in the USSR ("stool pigeons" in prison are generally easy to spot).

Chapter 6 describes "That Spring" at the end of World War II when Stalin, in gratitude for the deliverance of Bolshevism from the enemy, sent new waves of millions

into the camps, including all the returning Russian prisoners of war — something never before done by any country in the world's history. Unlike all Soviet and most Western historians alike, the author puts the events of these months in true perspective: the "consistent shortsightedness and stupidity" of Roosevelt and Churchill, their cruel surrender to Stalin of hundreds of thousands of Soviet citizens who preferred death to returning, and even the much-maligned "Russian Liberation Army" of Vlasov, who led "a phenomenon totally unheard of in all world history: that several hundred thousand young men, aged twenty to thirty, took up arms against their Fatherland as allies of its most evil enemy" (Hitler) (p. 262). "In general, this war revealed to us that the worst thing in the world was to be a Russian" (p. 256).

Chapter 7 is devoted to the "Engine Room"—the process of sentencing prisoners without a trial (most prisoners have never seen a judge), with no possibility of appeal.

Chapters 8 through 10 relate the growth of Soviet "Law." The great staged 'public trials' from 1918 to the end of the 1930's are described, revealing a new concept and purpose of law: not justice, but the benefit of the Party. For the "guilty," it makes no difference whatever whether they are sentenced with or without a "trial."

Chapter 11 gives details of the history of the "Supreme Measure" (the death penalty), which several times in Soviet history was briefly "abolished" — which of course did not prevent people from being killed in prison as usual. The sufferings of those waiting to be officially executed are worse even than those of other prisoners.

Chapter 12 is devoted to the prisons as such — "the old jail tradition," as opposed to the new camps — with many comparisons with Tsarist prisons, all to the immense advantage of the latter.

Part II is devoted to "Perpetual Motion": transportation to and from the camps, with chapers on the "Ships" (various inhuman means of transportation) and "Ports" (transit prisons) of the Archipelago, and the "Slave Caravans" (by cattle cars and barges and also by foot) which are required when thousands and millions of prisoners must be transported in a short time. The conditions here are worse than in the prisons and preliminary confinement centers, being aggravated by the presence of the "thieves" — common criminals and cut-throats who work with the police and guards to terrorize the "political" (i.e., innocent) prisoners. The author ends the chapter on the Slave Caravans thus: "We have reviewed and considered all the methods of delivering prisoners, and we have found that they are all... *worse*. We have examined the transit prisons, but we have not found any that were good. And even the last human hope that there is something better ahead, that it will be better in camp, is a false hope. In camp it will be... worse" (p. 587).

Volume Two of *The Gulag Archipelago* (just now coming off the press in Russian, in Paris) is devoted to these camps.

No human being can read this book without being shocked. But this is no ordinary expose of "man's inhumanity to man." It is not merely the story of one nation's tragedy. It is not an account of some monstrous "accident" of history, of the "mistakes of the past." Solzhenitsyn writes: "Thanks to *ideology*, the twentieth century was fated to experience evildoing on a scale calculated in the millions" (p. 174).

But what monstrous *ideology* can be responsible for such an historical "experiment" as the Soviet slave-labor system, the likes of which has not been seen in all the world's history of terrorism?

The Gulag Archipelago is not a "political expose," as the author himself says (p. 168). "Communism" as such is *incidental* to the terrible events described in this book; the villains of this book do not act the way they do because they are Communists, but *because they are the victims of an ideology far deeper and more deadly than Communism,* an "ideology" the significance of which few of them realize, because it is not something logically thought out, but rather something which has become part of their blood as men of our "enlightened" 20th century. Communism is merely the system in which this deeper "ideology" has been most effectively put into practice.

What is this "ideology"?

One of the 19th-century thinkers most in tune with the spirit of modern times, Friedrich Nietzsche, proclaimed himself the prophet of *Nihilism,* which he defined as the belief that "God is dead," that "there is no truth; the highest values are losing their value. There is no goal. There is no answer to the question: 'why?' " And he accurately described the consequences of this belief: "We have killed God, you and I! We are all his murderers! Is not the magnitude of this deed too great for us? *Shall we not ourselves have to become gods,* merely to seem worthy of it?" And again: "If there is no truth, *everything is permitted.*" He declared: "What I am describing is the history of the twentieth century, *the triumph of Nihilism.*"

This is the "ideology" of 20th-century man, the self-made god, and *The Gulag Archipelago* is the history of this 'triumph of Nihilism' by one who has lived through it.

Anyone who is aware of what is happening spiritually in the free world today, and reads this book with an open mind and heart, will find that it is not merely a description of something that has happened and is happening *far away, to others.* Solzhenitsyn himself, after being banished and finding that his brutally frank revelation of an "internal affair" of the Soviet Union was interfering with the progress of "world peace," and in particular with the "detente" between the USSR and the USA, has written in a letter to a German newspaper:

"The suppression of those who think differently in the Soviet Union is not an 'internal affair' of the Soviet Union, and it is not simply a far-away manifestation of cruelty against which noble sensitive souls protest in the West. The unhindered suppression of those who think differently in Eastern Europe creates a deadly, real threat to peace everywhere, prepares the possibility of a new world war much more surely than trade pushes this possibility away.... Today they are crunching *our* bones — this is a sure pledge that tomorrow they will be crunching *yours.*

"My premonitions come from a Soviet experience of many years' duration; my whole life has been devoted to the study of this system. Whoever is in charge of the fate of the West can disdain my premonitions today also.

"They will remember them when it will no longer be possible to obtain a scrap of a page of this very *Aftenposten* except under threat of a prison term." (*Aftenposten,* May 25, 1974. Russian text in *La Pensee Russe,* Paris, June 6, 1974.)

Is this merely the raving of another "right-wing fanatic"* whose "political" obsession with Communism has unhinged his mind so that he sees a "world conspiracy" where there is really only an "alternative social system" which, hopefully, will finally start "mellowing" any day now? No; this is the precise forecast of a man who views the Soviet system, and the state of the whole world, soberly and *spiritually.* "Politics" has nothing whatever to do with it. All political systems in the world today serve the same master; it is just that some are more "advanced" than others on the same path. Given the spiritual state of the contemporary world, it is inevitable that a Soviet-type Nihilism sooner or later will swallow up the whole world; where is there a power to oppose it?

Solzhenitsyn has indeed written the "history of the twentieth century." History, after all, is not a chronology of political or economic events; it is what happens in the souls of men, for good or evil. and only then is reflected in outward events. In the whole 19th century there were only two "historical events": the progress of the world-wide Revolution, which is to say, the progress of unbelief in men's souls; and the attempt of one power to stop it: Orthodox Russia — an "event" which can be seen as well in the lives of 19th-century Orthodox Saints as in the anti-Revolutionary actions of the Tsarist Russian Government. Similarly, in the 20th century only one historical event is very visible to us as yet: the progress of Revolutionary atheism (or *anti-theism,* to use the Socialist Proudhon's more accurate word) once it has come to power. The actions of those temporarily opposed to Bolshevism either out of envy (Hitler) or out of hypocrisy (the Western Allies) are only historical *episodes,* not *events;* Solzhenitsyn has chronicled the historical *event* of the 20th century.

Any American bankteller, mechanic, corporation executive, baseball player, religious leader, congressman, supermarket clerk — would fit nicely in the Gulag Archipelago, whether as a torturer or as one of the "helpless rabbits" (p. 6) who are his victims. Those with imagination in the West have already sensed this — witness the "surrealistic" stories of Kafka and the "absurdist" plays of Ionesco, which describe man in the grip of irrational forces in a world turned upside down. That is the Soviet Nihilist world, which the free world in its decadence is striving towards, but has not yet reached.

There is one dimension conspicuously absent in *The Gulag Archipelago,* and this will doubtless cause shallow critics to conclude that the book is, after all, no more

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* President Nixon is reported to have said to Secretary of State Kissinger shortly after Solzhenitsyn's banishment; "Solzhenitsyn is to the right of Barry Goldwater." To which Secretary Kissinger replied: "No, Mr. President, he's to the right of the czars." (*Newsweek,* March 8, 1974.)

than a work of "humanism," telling us only that "the human spirit will somehow survive, after all." This missing dimension is the *Christian,* the *Orthodox* dimension, which we know about through the testimony of numerous new martyrs and confessors of the Communist Yoke. The subject of religion, indeed, is mentioned only in passing in this volume. There are several hints, however, that this dimension will have its proper place in the next two volumes. Solzhenitsyn has woven his own autobiography in with the story of his suffering people, and in the period covered by this volume he was still an atheist, indeed a Marxist; he and his generation (those born around the first year of the Revolution) had yet to encounter the question of Christian faith as a *living reality.* At the conclusion of this volume the author describes his meeting at the end of World War II with a young man born in 1923 who astonished him by declaring that "*of course*" he believed in God. And Solzhenitsyn began to wonder if the new generation is moving "in *another* direction, in a direction we wouldn't have been able and wouldn't have dared to move in?" (p. 615). And he began to feel the reproach and the truth of the glances directed at him and his generation who were still, in spite of everything, "idealistic Communists" in 1945 when "our younger brothers would only look at us contemptuously: Oh, you stupid dolts!" (p. 615). If the promise of this first volume (which ends on these words) holds true, the next two volumes of *The Gulag Archipelago* will be yet more powerful and truthful, and will give yet greater insight into what will happen in Russia and the whole world when, as the author predicts, "whole waterfalls of Truth burst forth" (p. 298).

In this book Solzhenitsyn has spoken for a whole truth-starved people — and not only for those who are left in Russia. His attitude toward the Soviet system is *exactly* that of the Russian emigres* who for fifty years have been slandered and abused as "moth-eaten monarchists" and "political reactionaries." Let everyone know, then, that Solzhenitsyn's book expresses *exactly* what every true Russian means when he says that he is "anti-Communist." This is not a political statement, any more than Solzhenitsyn's is a political book; it is an expression of a burning love of truth, and of the hatred of falsehood which must accompany such love, if it is genuine.

A final word should be said about the language of Solzhenitsyn, as well as about the English translation. In the original, this book is a classic of Russian literature. Solzhenitsyn writes "with great soul," as Russians say, in a highly expressive, warm, lyrical language, very powerfully, with brevity and a biting wit. In Russian classical literature he is closest to the master Pushkin in his use of language. This is all the more amazing in view of the subject matter and his use of the crude Soviet jargon and slang. It is not the case, as the translator naively writes in his notes (p. 617), that Solzhenitsyn has "contributed to the revival and expansion of the Russian literary language" by introducing readers to this jargon (who needs such a "revival"?!), but rather that he has marvellously incorporated this language (which obviously has no value in itself, but is necessary in order to reveal the reality of Soviet life) into a classical literary work without at all destroying the beauty of the work. The book is extremely moving and very

* Not the Orthodox "liberals," who always *qualify* the truth they say they love, but only those "naive" ones who believe the same way the Orthodox Russian people has believed for a thousand years.

uplifting, and doubly so for anyone who has gone through the tragic and painful experience of "being a Russian" in the 20th century, and until now has not had someone to speak the truth of this experience to the world.

The English translation has failed to capture the beauty and power of Solzhenitsyn's language. To some extent this was inevitable, in that modern English on the one hand lacks the warmth and "soul" of Russian, and on the other hand has not been subjected to the cold and soulless barbarism of the "Soviet" Russian language, with its endless list of ideologically fabricated words and ugly abbreviations, and its deliberate vulgarization. The use of the foulest obscene language also has been deliberately promoted under the Soviet regime, and Solzhenitsyn himself notes that such language is specifically employed in interrogations as a means of torturing people who have been delicately brought up (p. 104).

Many of the nuances of Solzhenitsyn's language, therefore, simply cannot be conveyed in English. The translator, however, has added some vulgarization of his own. Solzhenitsyn marvellously conveys the atmosphere of even the most repulsive areas and aspects of Soviet reality — *without once resorting to foul language.* (Only once does does he use a foul word, when quoting Lenin directly.) The translator, however, deferring to the "liberal" taste of the West in this regard (which here is in accord with the Soviet, but not with the Russian, spirit), has "spiced up" the text on a number of occasions by using foul or crude words when they were not called for to translate the Russian. The same thing was done (much more crudely) by the American translators of Solzhenitsyn's first novel, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich,* who declared that they preferred to "spell out" the words which Solzhenitsyn used in a "disguised" form. But even in this "small" point one can see how far Solzhenitsyn's whole outlook is misunderstood in the West. His is the voice of honesty and decency rebelling against the lies and vulgarity of the Soviet system, and his translators put him into that same vulgar idiom he despises! Solzhenitsyn quite *deliberately* "disguises" or only hints at the vulgarity of Soviet language and does not "spell it out" — because he is not wallowing in that filth, as are contemporary writers in the West, but he has transcended it and written a work of genuine literature. All this is a revealing commentary on the distance between the crude Nihilist reality which is to be found everywhere today, and the stature of a literary and moral giant like Solzhenitsyn, who stands as much above Soviet reality as he stands above Western decadence.

All royalties from the sale of *The Gulag Archipelago* have been designated by Solzhenitsyn to be placed in a special Fund to be used for aid to families of political prisoners in the Soviet Union.